California GARDEN

NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 1999 Volume 90 No. 6 $1.50

HORTICULTURAL CALENDAR

NOV. 1

PALOMAR DISTRICT DESIGN FORUM Robert Gordon of San Luis Obispo. R. B. Community Presbyterian Church. Pomerado/R. B. Road. 12:30-3PM. $35 Series. $8 Door. 760/749-9608.

NOV. 1 - 6 WEEKS

CITRUS & AVOCADO CLASSES. Instructor Joyce Gemmell. Foothills Adult Center, Rm 12, 1550 Melody Lane, El Cajon. Monday Evening 6:00-9:10PM. 619/401-4122. $15.

NOV. 2

★SAN DIEGO FLORAL ASSOCIATION Three-Ring Basket Class. Casa del Prado, Rm 104, Balboa Park. 9:30AM-2:30PM. Information & Reservations 619/298-5182. $25/$30.

NOV. 3

★SAN DIEGO FLORAL ASSOCIATION Tour. Lotusland, Santa Barbara. One Day Trip. Wednesday, $50 & $53. Meals included. Call Ann Waters 619/277-5004.

NOV. 6

★SAN DIEGO FLORAL ASSOCIATION **Library** open for perusal of thousands of garden-related books from 10AM-3PM Monday thru Friday, and also the first and third Saturdays. **Members** of SDFA can check out books. (Membership is $10 a year, includes magazine.) Located in Balboa Park, Casa del Prado, Room 105. 619/232-5762.

NOV. 6-7

RANCHO SANTA ANA BOTANIC GARDEN AT CLAREMONT. Annual Plant Sale. Sat. 11AM-4PM., and Sun. 9AM-1PM. Free, donation. Info and classes: 909/625-8767.

NOV. 6-7

LAKE HODGES NATIVE PLANT CLUB Annual Plant Sale. In front of Von's Market, Plaza Center, Bernardo Center Dr., Rancho Bernardo. Sat. 9AM-4PM. Sun. 9AM-Noon. Benefits California Nativescape Garden at Wild Animal Park.

NOV. 8 - 6 WEEKS

QUAIL BOTANICAL GARDENS. Class: "Nature in Pastel." 1:30-4:30PM at Ecke Bldg. $85 garden members, $95 non-members. For info and to register: 760/436-3036.

NOV. 8

S.D. HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY. Meeting and Plant Forum: "Camellia Collecting in China." 6:30-9:30PM at Del Mar Fairgrounds. 760/630-7307. Free.

NOV. 9

★SAN DIEGO FLORAL ASSOCIATION Basketry 101, Make-up Class. Casa del Prado, Balboa Park. 9:30AM-2:30PM. Reservations 619/298-5182. $5.

NOV.11

THE HUNTINGTON. Garden Talk and Sale: "Cones, Corkscrews, and Cryptics." 2:30PM. General admission. 1151 Oxford Rd., San Marino. 626/405-2141. Friends' Hall.

NOV. 16

★SAN DIEGO FLORAL ASSOCIATION Creative Class with Palm Skeletons. Casa del Prado, Balboa Park. 9:30AM-2:30PM. Reservations Required. 619/298-5182. $20. If taking Holiday Arrangement class, inform SDFA by today which holiday you wish to do so correct materials can be ordered.

NOV. 16

QUAIL BOTANICAL GARDENS. Gourd Art Class. 9:30AM-2:30PM. $35 garden member, $45 non-member. Pre-registration and pre-payment required. 760/436-3036.

NOV.16 - DEC. 12

CORONADO HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION. Holiday House decorated with holiday themes. 1124 G Ave. $15 ($12 until Nov. 1). Lectures $5. Lunch available. 619/435-9080.

NOV. 20

★SAN DIEGO FLORAL ASSOCIATION **LIBRARY** will be open. See Nov. 6 for details.

NOV. 21

SUMI-E PAINTING SHOW. Black and white Japanese art. Rm. 101, Casa del Prado. 10AM-4PM. Free.

NOV. 23

★SAN DIEGO FLORAL ASSOCIATION Class to make Arrangement for Holiday of your Choice. See Nov. 16 for message. Casa del Prado, Balboa Park. 9:30AM-2:30PM. Reservations Required. 619/298-5182. $50.

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San Diego Floral Association
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Manuscripts are invited. Deadlines are the 20th of January, March, May, July, September, and November. *California Garden* reserves the right to edit any and all submitted material. All manuscripts and illustrations will be handled carefully, but we cannot assume responsibility for their safety. Submissions must be double spaced and/or on a computer disk from IBM or compatible, in WordPerfect 5.1. All opinions expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the editors of *California Garden*. No endorsement of named products is intended, nor is criticism implied of similar products that are not mentioned.

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10:00AM to 3:00PM

VOLUME 90 NUMBER 6

THE MAGAZINE FOR THE HANDS-ON GARDENER

NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 1999

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FRONT COVER Drawing of *Aloe vera (barbadensis)* is by Sara Torgison, who was one of the co-winners in a recent contest sponsored by *California Garden*. Ms. Torgison is in the seventh grade at San Diego School of Creative and Performing Arts, where her favorite subject is art.
PAGES 167, 173-174 illustrations by Bruce Horsfall.

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FLOWER SHOWS: Show chairman contact *California Garden*, 619/232-5762 if you want the magazine sold at your show.

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(**Horticultural Calendar** continued from page 162)

DEC. 3

★SAN DIEGO FLORAL ASSOCIATION Annual Holiday Tea for members, affiliates, and workers. Rm. 101, Casa del Prado. 4PM-5PM.

DEC. 3-4

★SAN DIEGO FLORAL ASSOCIATION Annual Holiday Show: "Holidays in Our Garden." Fri. and Sat. 5-9PM officially open for Christmas on the Prado, also open Sat. 12-5PM. Rm. 101, Casa del Prado. 619/232-5762. Free.

DEC. 4

★SAN DIEGO FLORAL ASSOCIATION LIBRARY will be open. See Nov. 6 for details.

DEC. 5

★SAN DIEGO FLORAL ASSOCIATION Room 101, Casa del Prado, will be open at 9AM for sale of selected trees, poinsettias and decorations. Trees are $55.

DEC. 6

PALOMAR DISTRICT DESIGN FORUM. Jan Meissner of Las Cruces, NM. Contemporary and Southwest designs. R.B. Community Church. Pomerado/R.B. Road 12:30-3PM. $35 Series. $8 Door. 760/749-9608.

DEC. 7

LA JOLLA GARDEN CLUB. Annual Holiday Tea, Bake Sale and Craft Bazaar. 12:30PM-3PM at St. James Hall, 7776 Eads Ave. $5 donation for community projects & scholarships. 858/456-0693.

DEC. 9

THE HUNTINGTON Garden Talk: "Getting a Handle on Tools." 2:30PM. General Admission. 1151 Oxford Rd., San Marino. 626/405-2141.

DEC. 18

★SAN DIEGO FLORAL ASSOCIATION LIBRARY will be open. See Nov. 6 for details.

DEC. 28 - JAN. 2

THE HUNTINGTON will be open 10:30AM to 4:30PM daily (Closed Jan. 1). General admission. Friends' Hall. 626/405-2141.

JAN. 3

PALOMAR DISTRICT DESIGN FORUM Perry Aminian of Bakersfield will present designs, and offer for sale ceramic containers he has created. R.B. Community Church. Pomerado/R.B. Road 12:30-3:00PM. $35 Series. $8 Door. 760/749-9608.

JAN. 21, 22, 23

DOS VALLES GARDEN CLUB, Valley Center, Community Hall. Garden Studies Series: Course I 9AM-3PM. Reservation required, $37. Lunch included. 760/749-5384.

JAN. 23

S.D. MYCOLOGICAL SOCIETY FAIR Mushrooms and fungi. 10AM-4PM. Room 101, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park. Free.

BALBOA PARK; ONGOING PROGRAMS

SAN DIEGO JAPANESE FRIENDSHIP GARDEN Open Tues. thru Sun. 10AM-4PM. Docent Tours with Reservations. Fee. 619/232-2780.

INTERPRETIVE WALKS Ranger guided. History oriented topics. Meet at Visitors Center. Tuesdays & Sundays at 1PM. 619/235-1121. Free.

OFFSHOOT TOURS Ranger guided. Various topics. Saturdays 10AM. Meet at Visitors Center. 619/235-1121. Free.

ONGOING EVENTS

QUAIL BOTANICAL GARDENS 230 Quail Gardens Drive, Encinitas. Garden Tours & Events. 9AM-5PM.760/436-3036 or check Web site www.qbgardens.com.

BLUE SKY ECOLOGICAL RESERVE Walks. Poway. Sat. & Sun. 9AM. Call 679-5469.

WALKABOUT INTERNATIONAL Local Guided Walks. Newsletter. 231-SHOE. Free.

THE HUNTINGTON "Tea & Tour" Package. Tues. and Wed. mornings 10:30AM Sept. thru May and 9AM June thru Aug. $24, advance reservation required. 626/405-2126.

Deadline for submission to HORTICULTURAL CALENDAR for JANUARY/FEBRUARY issue is November 15. **SAN DIEGO FLORAL ASSOCIATION** is not responsible for changes that are submitted late by the organizations.

SAN DIEGO COUNTY BRANCH
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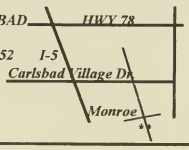

Gleanings . . .

TURF PAINT . . .
Homeowners, particularly in the Northeast, who have had their gardens ravaged by the prolonged drought, have turned to green dye, called turf-paint, to green-up their lawns. The spraying of turfs to make them look more attractive began in earnest when TV turned to color. The fields were unattractive so to film well the groundskeepers at sports stadiums could either replace the turf at a cost of thousands of dollars or spray it with a vegetable dye for several hundred dollars. Some stadiums are using artificial turf. The last time I was in Washington D.C. the lawns on the Mall had been dyed green. It had been done carelessly and paint had dripped down the curbs. It surely looked nicer than it usually does in the winter when the cold kills the grass and it is black.

FIGS . . .
Bare root figs will soon be available. This delicious fruit is becoming popular again. Fresh fruit is expensive and rarely available in the market because it is difficult to handle and ship. Most of the fruit grown commercially in California is dried. Prior to WWII almost every home garden in San Diego had a fig tree. Fig jam was common. Figs were introduced to San Diego (and California) in 1769 by Franciscan missionaries. The mission fig originated in southern Spain and was planted in the missions in Mexico.

This teardrop shaped, violet-black skinned fig grows well any place in the San Diego area. It usually produces two crops a year. There are over 100 varieties of figs that will grow in California but the mission and the brown turkey (introduced to California in 1850) are probably the easiest to get started. They are available in pots as well as bare root.

If you have gophers in your area, place the root of the fig tree in a hole lined with a box made of hardware cloth. Gophers love fig roots, and they will chew through a box made of chicken wire.

It is an attractive, mid-sizes tree. The milky sap that oozes from the tree when the figs are removed contains ficin, a protein-digesting enzyme that can irritate the skin. It usually is not necessary to wear gloves, but hands should be washed after harvesting the fruit. There is no problem with the fruit.

LADYBUG HOME . . .
Isn't it annoying when you release aphid-eating ladybugs into your garden and they all fly away? There is a wooden ladybug habitat one can purchase. It comes with a metal pole to mount it on and a box of scented "lures" that will encourage the ladybugs to stay in your garden. Look for it by the name "Ladybug Village."

PESTICIDE OVERUSE . . .
A recent EPA study found that homeowners use ten times the amount per acre of pesticides that farmers do. The homeowners also were found to use the chemicals "indiscriminately" and "at inappropriate times."

Some insecticides stay in the water and soil permanently and are causing many problems throughout the world. There are safer insecticides, and we should all use them. The insecticidal soaps, that are about as strong as dishwashing liquid, can be mixed with water and sprayed on plants. The insecticidal oils that smother the larvae or eggs of garden pests can be mixed with water and sprayed on. Pyrethrum, made from crushed chrysanthemum flowers, is safe, too.

RABBITS . . .
Apparently we have a large increase in the wild rabbit population. Gardeners in the suburbs are complaining that the rabbits are not only eating their vegetable crops but the flowers are being eaten, too.

According to Vincent Lazaneo, Horticultural Advisor at U.C. Coop Extension, the best way to keep out the rabbits is to build a fence around the garden. He says that a 36 inch high wire fence will be enough if the lower 6 inches are sunk in the soil. Rabbits are clever about burrowing under fences.

HIBISCUS . . .
Hibiscus is a popular plant in San Diego because it grows without much care, is an attractive shrub or small tree, and has gorgeous flowers. Now there are new varieties that are compact, bear a higher number of flowers, and can be grown in pots—even indoors. Most hibiscus are pink, red, white, orange, or yellow. Charles Black, a local grower, is the largest producer of exotic grafted potted hibiscus in the United States. He even has a blue one. Most flowers last only one day, but his grafted varieties last from two to four days. These plants are grown at Hidden Valley Nursery in Escondido.

SELECTING BARE-ROOT ROSES

BY MARIANNE TRUBY

BARE-ROOT ROSES WILL BE available sometime in December at local nurseries and garden centers. I hope you have had the opportunity to visit gardens and rose shows during the height of the blooming season, assessed your own roses, chosen those that need to be replaced, and have a list of your selections for purchase.

Regretably the bare-root season can produce degrees of quality of stock depending upon the growing season. Lack of rain during this past year will no doubt have affected the availability of varieties and the quality of the bushes available.

The days when we could select bareroots from well-maintained nurseries have pretty much disappeared and in their place plastic-wrapped roots in a sawdust-like material dumped in large bins are now the norm. They frequently dry out and/or have budded out with succulent growth while in cold storage, which is at the mercy of shoppers pawing through the bins. Many of these vigorous growers will survive fortunately and when planted produce the variety and color indicated on the label. The left-over bareroots often appear later in cans in the late spring and identification can be questionable. On the bright side, a plant actively growing in a container can be checked for virus on the foliage—one of the problems prevalent in today's roses.

There is a lack of agreement about the present method of marketing bare-root roses—particularly regarding the short roots. I can only say I have roses growing in my garden that were planted 25 to 30 years ago that have maintained their vigor and that those I have purchased in recent years do not seem to compete. Due to the thousands of roses that vie for the attention of the rosarian and the hype each year for the newly introduced varieties, selecting roses and locating those you wish to purchase can be a frustrating experience. Locally several nurseries have made available their listing and accept orders in October to ensure you will receive them. If you are anxious to secure specific varieties you will find this helpful. You may pay a little more, but you will spend less time searching and receive what you want. I have not purchased mail-order roses recently but you may find this method a happy solution.

From a garden of 300 plus cultivars I have reduced my garden to less than 100 bushes. I usually add a few of the new introductions each year concentrating on those that promise good cutting roses.

Those varieties I favor at present are:

Bewitched	Double Delight
Honor	Olympiad
Red Devil	Brigadoon
Fame	Lynn Anderson
Royal Highness	Princess Margaret

I do not include a yellow because, although I have several varieties, I have none that I can truly recommend except a floribunda named Sun Spray.

Visiting rose shows, you may be attracted to a certain variety and want it for your garden. Roses grown for exhibit often are the results of a rosarian who has given a great deal of devotion to his hobby and this variety may not do as well in your garden. Some roses are hard to obtain, some are disease-resistant, some bloom often, and some infrequently. Roses grow nearly year around here but do require a program of care. When you select your roses—personal preference is your guide. Many options for getting advice are available but finally we must rely upon our own idea of true beauty. □

Marianne Truby has lived and gardened at her home in Chula Vista since 1955.

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PROVIDING HABITAT FOR CALIFORNIA QUAIL

BY PAT REGAN

MORNINGS AND EVENINGS IN my backyard are special events filled with magical light, sounds, and activity. Filtered sunlight falls on hummingbirds buzzing from flower to flower and pausing occasionally to remind a rival just whose blossoms these are. Goldfinches hang from salvia seed heads carefully plucking out each precious seed, while bush tits seem to flutter through taller shrubs like slow-motion, wind-blown leaves, searching every branch and leaf for tender morsels of spiders and insects. Acorn woodpeckers and scrub jays chatter in the trees, while towhees, thrashers, and mourning doves forage through the leaf litter below.

Then there are the quail. The first soft cluck or "ut-at" is the sound of the line leader directing the flock (or covey) along a well-worn path down a bank and into an opening under a tree where they will find the leftovers from messy sparrows and jays snacking from feeders hung above them. Cautiously, they spread out scratching and bobbing in continuous gurgling sound and motion. Moments later, in an explosion of fluttering wings, they disperse as a Cooper's hawk dives from a perch to get a closer look. Invariably after the threat has passed, a straggler or two will spring comically across the yard trying to reconnect with the group. The call from the hiding place, which is best described as "chi-ca-go," helps them find their way along.

Amsinckia intermedia (fiddleneck), one of the favored annual forage plants for California quail.

Scenes like this are not as common as they used to be in California. The California quail (*Callipepla californica*) was historically pretty much endemic to California occurring from the southern tip of Baja to just inside southern Oregon. These chubby little ground dwellers were abundant in the valleys and foothills throughout the state. They were an important food source for native Californians and early European settlers, as well as many predatory animals. Though they have been introduced into parts of Washington, Idaho, British Columbia, Utah, and Nevada primarily for sport hunting purposes, and are now considered common throughout the western states, the escalating destruction and conversion of good quail habitat have led to their decline here in the middle of their ancestral range.

So what is a habitat? What makes it good for quail (and other animals!) and what can be done to attract them to your yard? A sign that we received from the National Wildlife Federation is posted at the base of a stairway in my backyard. It announces to visitors that this is a certified backyard wildlife habitat. It states that "This property provides the four basic elements needed for wildlife to thrive: food, water, cover and places to raise young." You don't need to be certified to attract quail to your yard but you do need to provide the basic elements they need to thrive!

Food and water are obviously very important to any animal, and California quail are benefited by having a reliable source of water such as a small pond, or a ground level bird bath, and any number of food possibilities from prepared bird mixes to new broad-leaved weed growth. But most critical to transforming your yard into the kind of habitat that any self-respecting quail can call home is in providing cover or hiding places near those food and water sources. And for that I have a few suggestions. The ultimate quail habitat has a balance between dense shrub and tree stands and relatively open ground dominated by annual forbs (broad-leaved plants as opposed to grasses and sedges) such as lupines (*Lupinus* sp.) lotus, (*Lotus* sp.) filaree (*Erodium* sp.),

(continued on page 185)

MORE FOOD IN LESS SPACE

BY LIZ BALL

BACK IN THE 1970s the average backyard vegetable garden was about 1000 square feet. Now it is typically 200 square feet. New houses tend toward smaller yards, so the farm model of growing food and the generous space it required has become obsolete. Contemporary vegetable gardening borrows the best design ideas from the past, while incorporating new technology and materials to make smaller vegetable gardens easier to manage, and more productive.

Two ways to coax more production from limited space is by borrowing from old cultures the concepts of raised beds and vertical growing. Shifting a garden layout from rows to raised beds almost doubles the available growing area, as most of the ground formerly devoted to paths is dedicated to production. Growing food vertically to exploit the airspace above the garden again almost doubles its effective production area. This configuration facilitates the use of soaker hose irrigation, woven fabric mulches and other space age materials to reduce dramatically the amount of work involved in producing crops.

RAISED BEDS

Raised beds are permanent, rectangular plots holding soil that remains loose and rich because it is never compacted by foot traffic. Paths between the beds are also permanent. While they require a significant investment of physical labor to dig and box, they do not have to be dug again every year. Raised beds promise years of virtually instant bed preparation and easy planting each spring. Try one bed at first. Dig it in the fall when the weather is cool, then add more beds over time. Because their excellent soil permits intensive planting, it will not be necessary to have as big a garden overall as before.

MAKING RAISED BEDS

Lay out the bed's dimensions with stakes and string. A width of 3 or 4 feet is a comfortable reach from either side for most adults. Lengths of 8 or 12 feet (conveniently allowing for evenly spaced trellis supports every 4 feet) are most adaptable to the typical backyard.

Begin digging within the string at one end, cultivating the soil to a depth of at least a foot—deeper is better. If working in a turf area, put aside pieces of sod for the compost pile. Working backward to avoid stepping on newly dug soil, turn over shovelsful of soil and mound them in a loose pile within the measured dimensions of the bed. This is a good time to incorporate organic material such as compost, peat moss or chopped leaves into the soil. Overachievers may wish to double dig the bed, but it is not required.

Bean Kentucky Blue, an All America Selections winner, is a pole bean suitable for vertical growing.

Designate at least 3 feet for path area around the bed. Scrape off the valuable top few inches of topsoil from the paths and mound it on the newly dug bed to increase its height, then spread wood chips or gravel, or lay bricks in the path area to eliminate future problems with mud. Rake and level the surface of the mounded soil in the bed and it is ready for planting.

A layer of straw or chopped leaves will protect the soil over the winter and discourage erosion of the mounded soil into the paths. While it is not necessary, boxing each bed with 2 by 10 inch wooden planks prevents erosion most effectively, makes beds easier to manage and looks more attractive. Boxed sides also provide a place to fasten fixtures to permit quick attachment of sturdy vertical supports for various crops.

THE VALUE OF VERTICAL

Another way to maximize production in limited space is to exploit the air space above the garden bed. Combined with raised boxed beds the potential for dramatically increased production with vertical growing is enormous. Plants grown vertically can be planted more closely together and produce more in the rich, friable soil of a properly managed raised bed. Because

Reasons to Use Boxed Raised Beds:

Save space

Maintain soil texture

Do not need annual digging

Heat up earlier in season

Use water and fertilizer more efficiently

Improve soil drainage

Permit intensive planting

Are neat and accessible

Support trellises securely

Permit use of shade cloth or plastic tents

Avoids soil compaction due to foot traffic

they take up only a few inches of surface soil, there remains lots of bed left to be intensively planted with low-growing vegetable plants. Orienting beds on a north-south axis assures that plant-laden trellises do not block the sun from lower growing plants as it moves from East to West across the yard during the day.

Erecting vertical supports is always a time consuming problem. Free-standing ones provide flexibility in placement, but are precarious, tending to collapse part way through the season from the weight of maturing crops. The planks that enclose a raised bed offer a convenient place to attach year round fixtures that make setting up and taking down trellises quick and easy. They make it possible to have a flat trellis system that runs along either side of the bed that is stable, yet easily reconfigured to facilitate crop rotation.

ESTABLISHING A TRELLIS SYSTEM

There are lots of ways to fasten trellis poles to the wooden planks of boxed beds. One tried and true method is to fasten 12 inch lengths of PVC pipe, 1½ to 2 inches in diameter, with plumber's brackets at four foot intervals along the insides of the long sides of the bed. Dig the PVC pipe into the soil so the opening is flush with the top of the board. Sturdy vertical poles, wooden or PVC, up to 8 feet long, fit easily and quickly into the PVC pipe fixtures for instant stability. Since their first 12 inches sit in the fixture below the soil level, the trellis will actually be 7 feet tall, about maximum reach for most adults.

Next, cut 4 foot lengths (the distance between the vertical poles) of furring strips or similar 1 by 2 inch slats, to make crosspieces to make panels of trellis that fasten to the vertical poles at top and bottom. The trellis material itself may be hand-strung wire or twine, or commercial netting made of nylon or plastic. Mesh with 4 or 6 inch holes allows for easy access when picking large vegetables such as tomatoes. Fasten it to the crosspieces with a staple gun to form panels that are easily mounted and removed from the vertical poles, rolled up and stored for next year. Drill holes at the ends of the crosspieces and at the tops and bases of the poles for attaching panels of trellis netting with screw bolts and wing nuts. □

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Veggies That Grow Well Vertically:

Beans, Lima Pole
Beans, Pole
Cucumbers
Melons
Peas
Winter Squash, such as acorn, butternut
Tomatoes, indeterminate

Benefits to Vegetables of Vertical Growing:

Better air circulation
Better access to sunlight
Less exposure to soil pathogens
Easier to harvest
Dry off faster after rain
Less likely to be curled or deformed

VEGETATIVE PROPAGATION

BY JEANINE DE HART

MY BOOK ON SEED PROPAGATION was well received, but there are many plants that need to be propagated by vegetative methods. This would include cultivars (cultivars are plants selected for outstanding properties that would be lost in seed propagation), plants that are difficult to grow from seed, or plants that produce no viable seed.

I prefer seed propagation because of the sexual diversity, but as with cultivars above, sometimes you wish for a clone of the parent plant. There are a number of plants, such as *Baccharis* 'Twin Peaks', that are male, so produce no seed. The seed of this female plant is white fluff that blows in the wind and comes up everywhere.

There are as many methods for plant propagation as there are plant propagators, but I will give the method that has worked for me in propagating natives. You will need a rooting hormone for some more difficult species, but none for the easier ones. The mix I prefer for easy to root species that are not totally drought tolerant is (1) 9 parts perlite and 1 part peat. This can be mixed in any container, but if you mix it in a wheelbarrow, like I do, make sure that you clean it out and wash the wheelbarrow. Peat is so acidic it will eat right through the metal if left overnight! The second method for those plants that are extremely water sensitive is straight (2) perlite.

No matter which mix you use, moisten thoroughly and wear a dust mask while mixing as perlite is irritating to the lungs when breathed. The rooting medium should not be kept wet but just barely moist, at this point, as there are no roots to absorb the water. The cuttings should be misted or sprayed lightly in order to keep the tops moist. As soon as plant material is removed from the mother plant, it begins to decay. When you are rooting plants, you are working toward "root before they rot." The best analogy is like a baby, top wet and bottom dry. Naturally, if you have access to bottom heat, you will be more successful as the process of rooting is more rapid.

After you have mixed your medium and put it into 4″ pots or flats, it will need to be well moistened. When everything is ready, it is time actually to make your cuttings. There are a few plants that need to be cut and let lay for a few days to heel over before they are put into the medium, but most plant material can be stuck in immediately. I cut the bottom on a diagonal and the top square. Using this method, you will not lose track of the orientation. This is especially true for vines.

It is best to use semi-hardwood for most shrubs, but softer new growth wood also can be used. Whichever you choose, the cuttings should be about 4″ in length, with leaves at the top and the wood stiff enough that it does not bend easily.

If the leaves are quite large, cut them down to half. That will be enough leaf material to nurture the plant and not enough to hasten wilting.

If you wish to root any of our wetlands plants, they can be rooted easily in water. Most of these would be for revegetation purposes and not suitable for the home garden. I won't go into any detail for these plants.

The chart gives some popular natives and methods I have found that work. I also shall indicate whether or not they're easy. Do not give up too soon as the euphorbs can take a year to develop roots, but will stay green the entire time. After roots are formed, keep the medium moist and cut back on keeping the top moist. It is necessary for the entire process to be done in a shady environment.

I cut the bottom on a diagonal and the top square. Using this method, you will not lose track of the orientation. This is especially true for vines.

There are two forms of rooting hormone. The easiest to find is powdered and has probably been cut to a given concentration with talc. The liquid form is available through supply houses and generally you would have to cut it yourself. If you do that, it is cut with 50% alcohol and 50% DI [deionized] water. You can cut it to various concentrations, which makes it more useful. Roses respond poorly to the liquid as the alcohol is toxic to them. For the home gardener, the powdered form is more convenient.

I have not tried to cover all the natives you might like to grow, so experiment! That is how I learned about propagation. You might find a way that is better than mine. □

Jeanine De Hart, at age fifty, graduated from SDSU with a degree in botany in order to pursue a career in California native plants. Her book, "Propagation Secrets for California Native Plants" is available for $6.00, including postage and handling. Send inquiry to 237 Seeman Drive, Encinitas, CA 92024.

PLANT	COMMON NAME	METHOD	COMMENTS
Arctostaphylos species	manzanita	1	very difficult without bottom heat, use rooting hormone
Artemisia species	sagebrush	1	easy, also easy from seed
Baccharis 'Twin Peaks'	dwarf coyote bush	1	this cultivar easy, species from seed
Ceanothus cultivars	California lilac	1	rather difficult, need rooting hormone
Euphorbia misera	cliff spurge	2	easy, but takes a long time
Galvezia speciosa	island snapdragon	1	hormone gives almost 100% rooting, easy
Justicia californica	chuperosa	1	hormone, easy
Lavatera hybrid	island tree mallow	1	hormone, easy, raise species from seed
Lycium brevipes	desert thorn	2	fairly difficult, hormone, easy from seed
Mahonia 'Golden Abundance' (a.k.a. *Berberis)*	Oregon grape	1	I've only been successful with a high humidity situation (a cold frame)
Rosa californica	California wild rose	1	easier digging up roots as the plant spreads
Romneya coulteri	matilija poppy	neither	easy from root cuttings, very difficult otherwise
Salvia species	sage	1	easy, also easy from seed.
Xylococcus bicolor	mission manzanita	1	very difficult, like manzanita. Also hard from seed

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NEW PLUMERIA SOCIETY

This group, now forming, will meet on fourth Sundays, February-October, in room 104, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park, 1:00-3:00 p.m. For more information, call Carl and Joy Herzog, 619/443-4795.

NEW PUBLIC RADIO GARDEN SHOW

Those who can receive stations KPFK 90.7 FM Los Angeles and KVCR 91.9 FM San Bernardino now can hear a new hour-long horticultural discussion program, "The Cultivated Gardener." Call stations for broadcast times.

Featured will be landscape designer Natasha Hopkinson, cookbook author and avid gardener Kathy Gunst, and Michael Weishan, garden designer and publisher and editor in chief of the magazine *Traditional Gardening*.

WHAT'S WATSONIA!

BY CATHERINE ZINSKY

THE *WATSONIA* GENUS COMPRISES a large group of South African bulbs closely related to *Gladiolus*, but of a freer, less formal, and to my mind, more graceful nature. I love *Watsonia*s. They're so easy to maintain, propagate easily and prolifically, are disease free, and make terrific cut flowers!

These majestic spring blooms, commonly referred to as bugle lilies, belong to the Iridaceae, or iris family, and can be adapted to almost any soil, as long as the soil drains well. A boggy soil will rot the bulbs, though watsonia's "bulbs" are actually corms, which are technically thickened underground stems capable of producing roots, and ultimately leaves and flowers. A corm differs from a bulb in so far as the corm stores its food in the solid center tissue, whereas a bulb stores food in its scales. A corm lacks scales.

Watsonia can be either deciduous or evergreen depending on the species. Most frequently grown are the deciduous sort, specifically hybrids of *Watsonia pyramidata*. The color range is vast and growing, but generally will range between shades of rose, pink, lavender, coral, white, and combinations thereof. Heights, too, can vary but are normally between 3 and 4 feet, though naturally there are exceptions.

One benefit of growing watsonias here in San Diego County, beyond the obvious, which are their ease and beauty, is that the corms need little to no care once planted. They do not need to be lifted after dying back, they require little to no fertilizer, and watering needs while dormant are minimal. This is one of those prized jewels that gives so much for so little in return.

Besides growing a myriad of *Watsonia pyramidata* hybrids, I also cultivate two rather unusual watsonias: *Watsonia augusta*, a perennially green variety with tall spikes of scarlet-orange flowers; and *Watsonia* 'Blushing Trumpet', a deciduous, short (18-24 inches high), deep apricot to orange variety that has much narrower trumpet-like tubular flowers. *Watsonia augusta* is propagated through division (a heavy shovel will do the trick), whereas 'Blushing Trumpet' is propagated like most watsonias, separation and replanting of the abundant corms reproduced each season.

Through experience, I have come to learn that periodic division of all watsonia corms enhances flower development, so I recommend division of your corms every 2-3 years. Replant in groupings of 3-5 corms, planting them an inch or two apart and six inches deep. With the remaining corms simply make new friends, passing them on to neighbors and fellow gardeners. By the same token, if you know of a gardener who grows watsonias, you should never need to buy the corms; simply be in the right place at the right time!

For those species that are deciduous, once the leaves turn brown, remove the dead material, chiefly because all those dead, browned sword-like leaves are unsightly. Come fall, new growth will appear irrespective of this chore. Fall is also the time that watsonia corms and their myriad of new hybrids can be found in most nurseries. Plant immediately, adding a little bonemeal to the soil strengthens growth, but is not absolutely essential with this specific genus. I personally add bone meal when planting any bulb, as a) it's organic, b) it aides bulb development, and c) it benefits the soil.

Watsonias are disease free, but not pest free. Snails and slugs love to chomp on both the flowers and leaves, then hide out at the base between the fat, sword-like leaves while they digest their meals and hide from the sun. So beware and take those steps necessary to eliminate these beasts, either with poisons or by hand-picking.

As cut flowers, watsonias **are** superb. I even enjoy using the flower-spent spikes that are trying to go to seed in arrangements. They're architecturally very interesting with their plump, almost pecan-shaped seed pods developing, and artistically highly attractive and unique. The only negative thing I can really say about watsonias is that if you are without friends, then one day you will find yourself glutted with them.

Good luck and happy gardening!□

Catherine Zinsky gardens at about 1900 feet in Crest. She is a free-lance writer for garden and canine publications.

BIRD PROBLEMS IN YOUR YARD

ARTICLES IN SEVERAL ISSUES have discussed how to attract birds to your garden. This time instead, we'll tell you **how to drive away birds**, if that is your need. My thought on this is not to grow plants that have been mentioned as attracting birds by their flowers, fruits, seeds, or protective cover.

Here is a partial recounting of the pamphlet "Backyard Bird Problems," sponsored by the Department of the Interior U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service:

Any bird, a cardinal, chickadee, or dove can become a "problem" when it does something unpleasant. What is unpleasant depends on what the bird is doing and how you react.

A mockingbird's midnight song may be a musical marvel to some but an annoyance to others. The flicker may be welcome at your feeder, but not if his hammering damages the cedar siding on your neighbor's house. The geese at your pond tempt you to offer them corn, until their droppings foul your lawn.

Birds come to your yard to eat and bathe, roost, and nest. Birds can cause trouble when they eat your cherries, drill holes in your birch trees, and fish for koi in your pond.

They can be hazardous to your health when they roost by hundreds in the trees at the edge of your patio. They can be a nuisance when they nest in your hanging baskets, on the ledge over your front door, or in clothes dryer vents.

PROBLEM BIRDS

What is the quickest, easiest way to eliminate problem birds? The "quick fix" solutions that first come to mind are: Shoot them. Trap them. Poison them. **WRONG.**

All wild birds (except pigeons, English sparrows and starlings) are protected by federal and state laws. You may **not** trap, kill, or possess protected species without federal and state permits. Call your US Fish and Wildlife Service Regional Office, your state wildlife officer and (US Department of Agriculture) County Cooperative Extension agent for advice.

Before you take any action, consider these questions:

- What do the experts recommend?
- Could it hurt people, pets and other wildlife?
- Will it reduce or eliminate the damage?
- Is it worth the cost?

Most bird problems do not have a simple solution. What eliminates a bird problem in one case may fail in similar situations. You may find a solution that seems effective, but don't be surprised if it works only for a short time. The secret to solving bird problems is to use several tactics and to vary them so birds don't become complacent.

Woodpeckers

Cabanis Woodpecker

Each year thousands of homeowners put out suet feeders to attract woodpeckers. These handsome birds reward us by consuming millions of noxious insects, including carpenter ants and carpenter bees.

While it's rare, an occasional woodpecker may single out a house for drumming, or worse, for a nest or dining site. Each spring, when males set up territories and attract their mates, these woodpeckers make their presence known by "drumming." Normally they pick a resonant dead tree trunk. As more homeowners remove dead trees, woodpeckers may turn to metal gutters, house siding and television antennas.

While drumming may be irritating, it usually doesn't physically damage your house. You can eliminate the drumming noise by deadening the resonant area. Fill the hollow space with caulk. Then distract the bird from the drumming site by using scare techniques: balloons, a child's pinwheel, flash tape, and strings of shiny, noisy tin can lids, wind chimes and/or pulsating water sprinklers.

If that doesn't work, create a physical barrier by screening the drumming site with hardware cloth, sheet

metal or nylon "bird netting."

Fruit Eating Birds

It's early summer. You've planted your garden. Your trees and shrubs are full of fruit. Before you get a chance to enjoy them, your crops are harvested by birds. Again, barriers are the most effective deterrents.

Hot caps (opaque plastic "hats" used to cover young plants in the spring to prevent freezing) and inverted crates can keep starlings from pulling up small plants.

Netting may keep starlings, catbirds, orioles, robins, blackbirds and jays from your grapes, apples, and raspberries.

Scare techniques may repel birds from gardens.

Placing feeders filled with sunflower, millet, nectar and peanuts nearby also may distract birds.

Fish-Eating Birds

Herons and egrets at the edge of a pond create a picture of tranquility. That is unless these and other fish-eating birds (gulls, terns, kingfishers, diving ducks, pelicans, cormorants, and ospreys) are dining on your prize koi.

First try scare techniques, then exclusion.

While they may be unsightly, physical barriers can deter most fish-eating birds. For small ponds, complete screening with bird netting may be effective. Properly spaced monofilament lines suspended over a pond may exclude gulls (every 4 feet), mergansers (every 2 feet), and herons (every foot). Perimeter fences provide some protection from wading birds.

Roosting Birds

San Diego Red-Winged Blackbird

You don't have to park your car under a tree to discover why people have no patience with roosting birds. Everyone knows bird droppings pile up under a roost.

An occasional bird perching on a tree limb, gutter or fence may not be a serious concern. But problems arise when pigeons perch on your balcony railing, sparrows select your carport rafter, and gulls bask on your boat dock piling. When starlings, grackles, blackbirds, and crows roost by the thousands in trees—they create a serious health hazard.

Physical barriers may be the most effective way to control birds roosting on buildings. To eliminate birds on ledges try porcupine wire, stretching a "slinky" toy, or stringing rows of monofilament, one or two inches above each other about two feet apart. Sheet metal or hardware cloth placed at an angle on ledges also may make roosting more difficult.

Pruning may help eliminate birds roosting in trees. Removing some cover may be enough to make the roost site less attractive. Scare tactics may provide temporary relief.

Nesting birds

Birds often pick what seem to be the strangest places to nest:

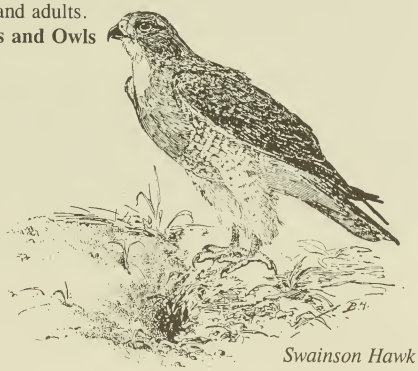
- in your gutter, clothes drier, or kitchen fan vent (house sparrows and starlings);
- above your front door (barn swallows);
- in a bucket in your garage (Carolina wrens);
- in your hanging basket (house finches);
- a pile of twigs on your window sill (doves);
- in the shrubs next to your front door (mockingbirds).

The federal and state laws that protect wild birds also protect their nests and eggs. You must have a federal permit to disturb the adults, nests, or eggs.

The most effective way to eliminate these problems is to discourage the bird **before** the nest is built by offering an alternate artificial "nest" nearby, but out of your way. If that doesn't work, contact a federal or state agent for advice. Resist the temptation to destroy the nest or harass the adults.

House (or English) sparrows, pigeons, and starlings are not protected by law. You may remove the nests, eggs, and adults.

Hawks and Owls



Swainson Hawk

The presence of hawks and owls (raptors) may cause problems for people who raise free-ranging poultry and small animals such as rabbits, for people who operate bird feeding stations, and for those who allow their household pets to roam at night.

Federal and state laws prohibit the capture, killing or possession of hawks and owls. The best solution to most raptor problems is prevention. Keep your pets indoors, and your livestock in pens.

If you feed wild birds, expect a visit from a hungry hawk or owl. Raptors at a birdfeeding station are a problem only when they perch nearby all day. You won't see any birds at your feeders. Rather than get upset, consider yourself fortunate to get a close-up look at these magnificent birds. Stop filling your feeders for a couple of days, and the raptors will look for dinner elsewhere.

Nuisance Waterfowl

Ducks, geese, swans, and cranes can cause problems near rivers, ponds, and lakes. They feed on crops, grass, and other vegetation.

During their summer moult, flightless birds may create more problems by trampling plants and leaving droppings.

Whatever the problem with waterfowl, immediate action is crucial to successful control. Farmers are encouraged to use early-ripening and damage-resistant plant varieties. Another strategy, delaying fall plowing, allows waterfowl to feed in harvested fields.

A combination of several frightening techniques may produce the best results: scarecrows, noisemakers, flags, balloons, and dogs.

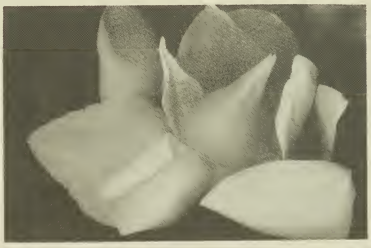
Scarecrows should be of simple construction and move in the wind. Put one in every five acres and move them every two to five days. Old cars, farm machinery, pinwheels, streamers, fluorescent traffic cones, and aluminum pie plates, if they move in the wind and make noise, also can be effective waterfowl scares.

Noisemakers: Contact your state animal damage control expert for advice on using explosives as noisemakers.

Flags may be the most effective and least expensive control tool. Make two by three-foot black plastic flags on four-foot posts. Put one flag per acre in fields where waterfowl have been feeding, one per five acres in fields with no damage.

Balloons, if properly maintained and frequently moved, can be effective waterfowl scares. Fill a two-foot diameter balloon with helium and anchor it with a 50 to 75 pound monofilament line.

Dogs. A free ranging dog, trained to chase birds as soon as they land, will discourage waterfowl. □



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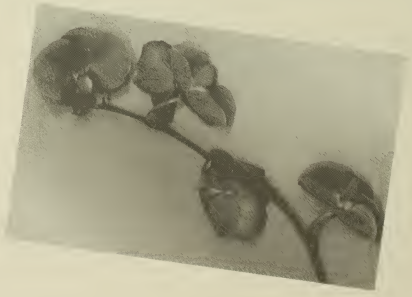

Now is the Time . . .

A CULTURAL CALENDAR OF CARE FROM OUR AFFILIATES, UC COOPERATIVE EXTENSION, AND *CALIFORNIA GARDEN* STAFF

AFRICAN VIOLETS
Helen La Gamma

NOW IS THE TIME

TO PREVENT extreme differences between night and day temperatures.

TO KEEP the plants well groomed and repot those that have outgrown their pots. A good rule—the pot should be ⅓ the diameter of the leaf span.

TO CONTINUE to have good circulation of air around the plants.

TO PROVIDE adequate humidity; monitor the temperature carefully.

TO PLAN on using your plants with holiday decorations; plant in containers to match color scheme.

BEGONIAS
Margaret Lee

NOW IS THE TIME

TO CLEAN up all debris—remove dead leaves and spent blooms.

TO WATER as needed.

TO PUT a top dressing of your favorite mulch around plants to replace any soil or mulch washed away by fall rains.

TO GIVE a light feeding several times a month to help the plants withstand any adverse conditions a little better.

TO SPRAY for mildew control.

TO ALLOW tuberous begonias to die back on their own; put aside and let rest, but sprinkle occasionally.

TO BE VIGILANT for insects; spray for mealybugs and other pests.

BONSAI
San Diego Bonsai Club

NOW IS THE TIME

TO REDUCE watering, deciduous trees require just enough to keep them from drying out.

TO MOVE plants into shade if a hot spell occurs. Avoid a second growth period during this time—it will weaken the trees.

TO REFRAIN from fertilizing or transplanting at this time.

TO KEEP deciduous trees protected from sudden changes of temperature.

TO REMOVE any old leaves, fruit, or seeds from deciduous trees.

TO PRUNE black pines by cutting the candles about half length.

TO GRAFT conifers in December.

BROMELIADS
Mary Siemers

NOW IS THE TIME

TO STOP fertilizing during fall and winter months, except those that are kept in a greenhouse.

TO REDUCE the frequency of watering when weather turns cooler.

TO PROTECT your plants from hail damage during the rainy season by providing overhead protection such as shade cloth that will allow plenty of light.

TO PROTECT plants from freezing temperatures by covering with sheets or newspaper.

TO KEEP plants clean by cutting spent blooms and dead leaves with scissors.

TO SPACE plants apart to allow air circulation. This helps to prevent scale.

CACTI & SUCCULENTS
Joseph A. Betzler

NOW IS THE TIME

TO WATCH your plants. Most cacti and succulents have a dormancy period. Depending on the weather, many winter growers may start early growing.

TO FERTILIZE the plants that are actively growing.

TO WATER only in the morning on a day that is going to be warm. By doing this, no standing water will be on plants in the evening.

TO PROTECT tender plants from excessive cold and winter rains. Repair cracks and leaks in shelters before the rains arrive.

TO KEEP ants under control; they transport aphids and mealybugs.

TO REMEMBER that when plants become too cold during the cold evenings the growth of fungi and bacteria can be fostered.

TO START looking for winter growing succulents to add as an extra dimension to your collection.

TO CLEAN up your plants' growing area.

CAMELLIAS
Les Baskerville

NOW IS THE TIME

TO FEED with a 2-10-10 or 0-10-10 fertilizer to encourage bud development, once a month.

TO CONTINUE disbudding to produce larger blooms.

TO PICK up all old blooms to prevent petal blight.

TO SELECT new plants while in bloom.
TO ENCOURAGE plants to have dark green leaves by feeding an iron supplement.
TO SPRAY if necessary for mites and worms.
TO KEEP a regular watering schedule, never let a plant dry out—maintain an even, moist condition.
TO MAINTAIN humidity—on any dry, hot days mist in later afternoon to keep from burning leaves.

DAHLIAS

Abe Janzen

NOW IS THE TIME

TO WITHHOLD water and fertilizer to let the plants go dormant.
TO ALLOW plants to dry—when brown about 12 inches from ground, cut off the stalk.
TO LEAVE tubers in the ground to harden off if there is good drainage. Otherwise lift roots before the heavy rains.
TO WASH clumps after digging, let dry a few hours before storing. If dividing tubers, treat cut area with soil sulfur, store in vermiculite, sand, or other medium. Store out of the weather. Be sure tubers are tagged before storing.

EPIPHYLLUMS

San Diego Epiphyllum Society

NOW IS THE TIME

TO WITHHOLD fertilizer, especially one with nitrogen. Allow the plants to become semi-dormant.
TO WATER sparingly, but do not allow plants to dry out completely.
TO PROTECT plants from exposure to the elements. Frost, hail, and strong winds can cause irreversible damage. Overexposure to harsh winter sunlight can be as detrimental as hot summer sun.
TO TIE or stake long branches so they will not break when winds and rain arrive.
TO CHECK for snails and slugs; a few granules of Sluggeta at the base of the plant are often effective and leave little to no residue.
TO MAINTAIN good grooming and prune out nonproductive branches to conserve plant energy.

FERNS

San Diego Fern Society

NOW IS THE TIME

TO CHECK containers to ensure planting mix has not completely broken down; add more mix to containers that need it.
TO BE ALERT for insects. Slugs and snails are very active.
TO WATER if it does not rain. Check plants not reached by rain.
TO APPLY a weak fertilizer solution once more before the December rest period.
TO PLANT spores and keep in a warm area.
TO CLEAN out weeds, oxalis, and debris from pots.
TO PROTECT plants at night in frost areas. Cover with newspaper or old sheets or place in garage.

FRUIT TREES AND VINES

Vincent Lazaneo, Hort. Advisor, UC Coop Extension

NOW IS THE TIME

TO PRUNE deciduous trees and vines after their foliage has dropped. Wait until early spring to prune evergreens.
TO SPRAY dormant deciduous trees and vines with horticultural oil to kill scale, insects, spider mites, and other overwintering pests.
TO SPRAY peach and nectarine trees with a fungicide such as lime sulfur (calcium polysulfide) to control leaf curl.
TO ORDER bare-root trees and vines to plant in December or January.
TO PROVIDE frost protection for young citrus and other subtropical fruit trees.

FUCHSIAS

William Selby

NOW IS THE TIME

TO ALLOW plants to rest; reduce or stop fertilizing.
TO DO heavy pruning in mild areas or in a greenhouse. Can make cuttings if a good tip available.
TO CLEAN up. Remove all dead leaves, blossoms, and debris from pots and baskets and around plants in the ground.
TO WATCH for insects, molds and fungi in warmer areas.
TO MULCH plants left outside in areas where there is danger of frost; move baskets under cover for protection.

GERANIUMS (Pelargoniums)

Carol Roller

NOW IS THE TIME

TO WATER thoroughly when plants become somewhat dry. Watering will not need to be done as often as in the warmer seasons. Allow the excess water to drain away. Keep the foliage as dry as possible. Commercial plants grown in (coir) coconut fiber should be watered less often than plants in conventional planter mix.
TO CONTINUE feeding as needed. Do not allow plants to show prolonged signs of nutritional deficiencies. Use a balanced fertilizer which can be dissolved in water.
TO CONTINUE a pest control and disease prevention program, using all products according to the manufacturer's direction.
TO PRUNE any plants which have not been cut back. At least one green leaf should remain on every stem of regals, scenteds, and similar types. Lanky plants which were pruned in the fall can be cut again to produce compact plants.
TO MAKE cuttings from the prunings. Shelter cuttings

from extreme weather. They will root faster in a warm location.

TO PINCH the rest of the plants which were pruned in the fall.

TO GIVE plants temporary shelter if the temperature approaches freezing.

TO ROTATE plants on a regular basis in order to keep well shaped.

GREEN THUMB

Editorial Staff

NOW IS THE TIME

TO FEED bird of paradise. Cut out dead growth from clumps to improve appearance.

TO PLANT bulbs for spring blooms—daffodils, narcissus, ranunculus, anemones, scillas, callas, tulips, and hyacinths.

TO PRUNE and shape holly and pyracantha when cutting berries for holiday decorations.

TO APPLY dormant spray in December to control pests and disease next year; to use snail and slug bait regularly.

TO ENRICH your soil, prepare now for bare-root planting in late December and January.

HERBS

JOHN NOBLE

NOW IS THE TIME

TO DIG and amend the ground around perennial herbs and winter flowering annual beds.

TO PLANT garlic, calendula, borage, chickweed, sage, thyme, and rosemary.

TO ADD native herbs to your landscape. Include the native sages, yerba santa, yerba mansa, yucca, mugwort, ceanothus, and elderberry.

TO HARVEST your culinary herbs: bay, basil, rosemary, thyme, lemongrass, oregano, and sage.

TO USE them fresh in preparing gourmet Thanksgiving treats.

TO MAKE dry herbal bouquets and wreaths, or preserve them fresh in herbal oils and vinaigrettes. They make delightful and consumable holiday gifts.

IRIS

San Diego/Imperial Counties Iris Society

NOW IS THE TIME

TO CLEAN beds of dead leaves and weeds; aphids winter-over in debris-filled areas.

TO SPRAY for aphids or give a light feeding of a systemic to control all sucking plant pests.

TO MAKE a final planting of bearded types, spurias, Louisianas, and Siberians.

TO PLANT bulbous type iris—Dutch, English, and Spanish for spring bloom.

TO MOVE and replant Pacific Coast natives in late December when the little white roots are showing. Water well until they are established.

NATIVE PLANTS

Jeanine De Hart

NOW IS THE TIME

TO AUGMENT winter rains by watering, especially your newly planted natives. Watering them deeply and less often is the key.

TO CONTINUE planting California native plants. Sow seed for wildflowers for early spring bloom.

TO CUT back Matilija poppy. If you want to take root cuttings, cut clear to the ground. Wait a week or two and take pieces of the pale orange root that are as big around as a pencil and about 4″ long.

TO MULCH your beds with the leaf drop including pine needles. Don't remove the droppings under the native oaks though as that's natures way of cooling the root zone as well as recycling nutrients back to the soil.

TO LIGHTLY fertilize the natives you planted last year. I find that about one-half the recommended dosage to be about right. **NEVER** feed your newly planted natives the first year.

TO CHECK drainage after it rains. If there are boggy areas use them to plant *Mimulus guttatus, Anemopis californica* and other water loving plants. Never plant *Fremontodendron, Ceanothus, Arctostaphylos or Dendromecon* in areas that have poor drainage.

TO KEEP the hummingbird feeders full as all the natives will bring them to your garden!

ORCHIDS

Charles Fouquette

NOW IS THE TIME

TO FEED a dilute solution of 30-10-10 fertilizer to intergenetic *Oncidium* hybrids, *Brassidium*, *Miltonia* if they are planted in bark. If they are grown in any other medium, feed a solution of 18-18-18. (The numbers reflect a guideline, not hard and fast numbers.)

TO FEED *Cymbidium* a 30-20-20 fertilizer. Stake new spikes—do not rotate plants. Protect buds and flowers from hail, rain, or sun damage.

TO REPOT *Cattleya* if new growth is outside of the pot and the plant is in active growth. (Otherwise, wait until spring.) Feed an 18-18-18 fertilizer, or similar, during the winter and only every third watering.

TO CLEAN up old leaves, flowers, and other "trash" in growing areas. Remove shade cloth to give as much light as possible to the common growing areas. Clean the swamp cooler; drain the water out of the bottom; protect the motor by wrapping it with a plastic trash bag after you have oiled it and checked the belts and cords.

TO CLEAN humidity spray nozzles. Remove nozzles from feed line, loosen the brass parts and take apart. Soak these parts in a glass container with a solution of ten parts water to one part swimming pool acid (*e.g.*, phosphoric, muriatic), using protective gloves and goggles. Or use pure vinegar, which works well but is slower. Through the glass container you will see when the parts are clean;

rinse them with clear water and reinstall, after flushing the feed lines.

TO CHECK the heater fittings, pilot light, flues, and vents. Check that the temperature sensors and activators are set at their HI-LO settings. You must have a fresh inlet somewhere in the hothouse, for AIR. You need clean air for combustion in the heating chamber and to replace the air burned in combustion going up the flue to the outside of the hothouse. If you don't provide a clean air intake, you will have poor and unclean combustion and ethylene gas in the hothouse killing flowers.

TO LET deciduous *Dendrobium* go dormant. Stop feeding when leaves start to drop. Water just enough to maintain root moisture. (Start to fertilize and water normally next spring when buds have swollen and are starting to develop and plant is starting active growth.)

TO HAVE *Phalaenopsis* be well on their way in the flower initiation mode at this time. Increase light to about 1500 foot-candles by any means—shade cloth removal, etc. Try to duplicate the weather in the areas where phals are native (at this time of year the temperatures drop and it is very clear, cloudless, and relatively dry). You lowered the night temperature through October to 52-55 degrees while fertilizing with dilute solutions of 30-20-20 every other watering. In November, maintain the high light and increase the night temperature to 62-65 degrees (your target minimum temperature). The first week, water with clear water to flush all salts that may remain. The next three weeks, water with a solution of epsom salts, mixed 4 lbs. in 5 gals. water, applied through a Hozon proportioner. This gives the plants the magnesium sulfate they need for colorful flowers. The first week of December, flush again with clear water. The next three weeks, use a high phosphorus fertilizer to help flower production and plant turgidity. By January, you should be back to average care and fertilization. Try to maintain the high light until the temperatures get warmer, then drop the light to 1000± foot-candles until next year. Maintain air movement at all times.

ROSES

Marianne Truby

NOW IS THE TIME

TO CHECK your rose garden for intruding roots from trees and shrubs that have been robbing your plants of water and nutrients. Take a shovel and go around each of your bushes and sever any that have moved into your beds.

TO PREPARE list of replacement and/or new varieties you wish to purchase from lists of incoming bareroots available from mail order sources and your local nurseries. If you have limited space, you may wish to put off purchasing newly introduced varieties until they have been grown in your locale.

TO ENJOY fall blooms that are frequently outstanding depending on weather conditions.

TO REDUCE amount of water but do not allow bushes to become too dry if fall rains do not occur.

TO REMOVE bushes no longer producing and prepare new planting holes by adding amendments and superphosphate to existing soil to give bareroots a good growing medium.

TO PRUNE floribundas in late December but delay pruning hybrid teas until buds begin to swell in January or early February. Consult rosarians in your locale for best date.

TO CLEAN up entire rose bed and dormant spray once before pruning and again after pruning before buds leaf out.

TO PREPARE for pruning by checking your equipment. Proper equipment, clean and sharp, will make the job easier. Don't forget the gloves and knee pads.

VEGETABLES

Vincent Lazaneo, Hort. Advisor, UC Coop Extension

NOW IS THE TIME

TO REMOVE and compost warm-season vegetables to prevent pests and diseases from overwintering on them.

TO CONTINUE planting cool-season vegetables which will not be subject to frost injury.

TO PLANT seeds of short-day onions, such as 'Grano', 'Granex', or 'Crystal Wax', and garlic cloves in November for bulbs next summer.

TO PLANT dormant crowns of artichoke, asparagus, and rhubarb. To avoid crown rot of rhubarb, plant crowns in containers filled with porous potting soil and transplant into garden where drainage is good after several leaves have developed.

VEGETABLES, ANNUALS

from UC Cooperative Extension Publications

NOW IS ONE OF THE BETTER TIMES IN FROST-FREE AREAS

TO PUT IN TRANSPLANTS OF: broccoli, cabbage, and cauliflower — California natives, cineraria, columbine, fairy primrose (*Primula malacoides*), garden stock (*Matthiola incana)*, hollyhock, Iceland poppy, ornamental kale, pansy, pink sand verbena, pot marigold (*Calendula*), snapdragon, and viola.

TO PUT IN SEEDS OF: beets, carrots, chard, kale, kohlrabi, lettuce, onion (green and dry), parsnips, spinach, and turnips — baby blue eyes, California natives, candytuft, Chinese forget-me-not *(Cynoglossum amabile*), forget-me-not (*Myosotis sylvatica*), lupine, sweet alyssum (*Lobularia maritima*), spring flowering sweet pea, and Virginia stock (*Malcolmia maritima*).

OUR NEW ADDRESS

When writing to us, it is not necessary to include "Casa del Prado, Balboa Park." We print that sometimes merely to let people know where we are if they wish to come to the office/library. The address is 1650 El Prado #105
San Diego CA 92101-1622.

SAN DIEGO FLORAL ASSOCIATION

By Barbara S. Jones, SDFA Historian

THE SAN DIEGO FLORAL ASSOCIATION was founded in April 1907 with the help and encouragement of the Chamber of Commerce. The objective was to beautify San Diego and to encourage homeowners to beautify their own gardens.

The first project (two months later) was to give a civic flower show to introduce the citizens of San Diego to the potential of the plants that could be grown here. All 5000 of the brochures were given away. Plants and cuttings were distributed free.

The organization immediately began to give free seeds, cuttings, and plants to citizens every weekend at the Chamber of Commerce. It became obvious that most of the people had come from places where growing conditions, soil, water, etc. were different—so in July 1909 the first issue of *California Garden* magazine was issued. The magazine specializes on growing in this area. It has been in continuous publication since that time. (This is the oldest horticulture magazine in continuous publication in the United States.) It is a good historical source of the happenings in San Diego. Only during one two year period has the editor been paid. All writer, editors, photographers were and are volunteers. Many were and are well-known authorities in their fields. People wanted to know how to grow vegetables and fruits, so even though the organization was founded to beautify the area, it also gives advice on growing fruits and vegetables. Today the magazine is taken by readers in foreign countries with similar conditions and in colder areas of the United States where the information is used for growing in glasshouses.

The organization was very helpful to the city during the preparation for the 1915 Exposition. Ladies of the group served on a city-sponsored project to plant the parking strips throughout the city. Every area had its advisor who not only gave plants to interested homeowners but encouraged them to plant adjacent vacant lots. Kate Sessions of local fame was one of them. Mrs. Robinson, wife of the founder A.D. Robinson, was another. In fact, most of the area advisors were wives of the "movers & shakers" of the city. Members also donated specimen plants, especially trees, from their gardens to help plant Balboa Park. Over 3000 ferns were grown in members' homes for planting along the Prado for the opening in 1915.

Important founders include A.D. Robinson (his private garden was famous Rosecroft Gardens); Kate Sessions, world famous horticulturist and botanist; Frank Gifford, first commercial grower of olives in the U.S. In 1998 SDFA printed a book containing all the articles written in *California Garden* by Kate Sessions.

This organization is probably the most influential group in determining the ambience of San Diego. To get an idea of how the San Diego area looked in 1907, look at the sagebrush areas along Florida Canyon. At that time, most of the homes were surrounded with bare dirt and a few straggling plants.

Large civic garden shows were given two times a year until WWII by the organization. After WWII many small garden shows were given by specialty clubs and plant organizations. At the present time, some affiliate club of SDFA gives a flower show in Casa del Prado almost every weekend.

In 1923 SDFA became sponsored by the city and was given the use of the Kansas Building in Balboa Park with the understanding that it would be used for the public good. The group refurbished the building and built restrooms and a kitchen. (It was the first group allowed to use a Park building.) Ever since that time, SDFA has maintained a telephone service, library, and exhibits in Balboa Park at least five days a week (not in Park during WWII). SDFA occupied the Floral Building until they were required to move to Casa del Prado in 1972.

SDFA was responsible for starting projects to create parks to preserve groves of native live oaks and torrey pines.

Since 1972 SDFA has given a flower show in Casa del Prado in December. Since 1978 these shows have been given as part of "Christmas on the Prado" with the assistance of some of our affiliated clubs and societies.

At the present time, we have 76 affiliated groups—garden clubs, plant societies. We maintain current information on their meetings, contact address and phone, etc. We answer questions and refer inquiries to the proper group.

There are over 4000 volumes in our library, many over 100 years old. New books are added on an ongoing basis. The library is open to the public without charge. SDFA gives horticulture tours, classes, lectures, and all fees, if charged, are moderate to cover costs. We are not a profit-making organization. The San Diego Floral Association is still doing today after 93 years what it has always done—helping to beautify San Diego.

PLANTS FOR CHRISTMAS DECORATION

BY ROBERT HORWITZ

RIGHT IN YOUR OWN neighborhood are many plants that you can use for Christmas decoration to make wreaths or swags. Dried plant stems placed in decorative containers or living trees or shrubs can be decorated. One easy suggestion is to cut pyracantha stems that have a plethora of red berries and work them gently into wreathes or place them in a vase. You could make a sort of crèche framework and weave the stems into it with a space for small presents underneath and cards tied alongside the stems.

Look in the nursery for a potted tree that you could use for your Christmas tree, and when the holidays are over you could plant the tree in an appropriate space in your yard. **All the conifer trees in my front yard were once potted Christmas trees and today reach over fifty feet into the air.** [See "Horticultural Calendar" for 5 December; any remaining potted coast redwood (*Sequoia*) trees will be for sale.]

Pyracantha

A favorite Christmas plant is the poinsettia, growing them is a large industry in San Diego County, primarily at the Ecke Farms. Over the years, the poinsettia has been bred to attain many shapes and forms and can be had with red, pink, yellow, or white blossoms. This plant, too, can be planted into the ground after Christmas along your house or in a fitting situation in the garden.

I have seen many gardens in my walks around my neighborhood that have the English holly that has dark green leaves with spiky tips. It has been used as decoration for ages both here and in England from where it originally came. The holly makes a delightful green background for colored decorations. Be careful in handling the leaves as the stickers can penetrate the skin.

If you have pine trees that have pine cones, use the cones interwoven with other plant material to make a wreath. You also could string them in long loops and wind the loops around the base of your Christmas tree or on french doors. One of the good things about the pine cones is that they smell subtly piney, which is a good holiday aroma.

Look for other plants that have the characteristic Christmas combination of red and green and let your imagination dictate how to use them in your decorations. For a gardener, this is much better than lots of tissue paper, plastic, glass, and foil.□

Robert Horwitz is a retired aerospace engineer who gardens in the Point Loma section of San Diego.

SAN DIEGO FLORAL ASSOCIATION
BASKETRY, CRAFT, and FLOWER ARRANGING CLASSES

CASA DEL PRADO, ROOM 104, BALBOA PARK
9:30AM to 2:30PM
Bring a lunch, coffee will be provided
Call MARIE WALSH 619/298-5182
PLEASE PREREGISTER!

SEE PAGE 162 FOR DATES AND DESCRIPTION

FLOWER ARRANGING, BASKETRY, and CRAFT

- ☐ Three-Ring Basket $25 member, $30 nonmember
- ☐ Basketry 101, Make-up class $5
- ☐ Creative Class with Palm Skeletons $20
- ☐ Make Arrangement for Holiday of Your Choice $50

Amount enclosed $ . . . . . Make check payable to San Diego Floral Association. SEND TO: San Diego Floral Assoc., 1650 El Prado #105, San Diego CA 92101-1622

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Book Reviews

WINDOW BOXES: INDOORS & OUT
James Cramer and Dean Johnson
New York, Artisan Publishing Company,
1999, 176 pages, 9″ x 10″, 170 color photos, hardcover, $27.50

Mini-gardens planted in unique containers are the focus, if not obsession, of the authors, whose home, "Seven Gates" is in Western Maryland. Soul brothers of Martha Stewart, they describe and display a rich variety of plant combinations rooted in everything from salvaged fences to broken pots or anything that will hold soil for at least a season. Season is really the operative word here, as the book, with its gorgeous color photos, is organized by the calendar: fortunately, this means that Southern Californians can apply much of the book's inspiration at any time of the year.

Finding and recognizing the potting possibilities in all sorts of containers has been raised to a fine art here, but planting them with striking colors and textures proves the authors' horticultural skills. With specific proportions for planting mixes and plant maintenance instructions, their enthusiasm for creating these small landscapes is hard to ignore, and as they remind the reader, it's easy to take risks with plants of uncertain expectations when the scope of the project is so small. Mostly, they are using annuals that might make this approach even more attractive to local gardeners.

The authors' design skills are impressively displayed in containers of their own making, from a small greenhouse/potting table for a sunny window to a simple wire candle hanger. There are many special holiday plantings and arrangements, but my favorite was an Easter eggshell planted with a single nasturtium seedling.

Reviewed by Marge Howard-Jones

DESIGNING WITH ROSES
Tony Lord
North Pomfret, Vt., Trafalgar Square Press, 1999, 192 pages, 10″ x 10″, 103 color photos, hardcover, $35

Faced with the prospect of reviewing yet another "run of the mill" book on roses and assuming the title was directed toward the floral art of arrangements, I have found this title by Tony Lord the reward for all the repetitive and biased books on roses available today.

He jumps into his subject with a forthright description of the plight of those of us who love roses in all their various forms, who are concerned with the emphasis given to rose problems rather than the beauty they provide in every area of the world.

Opening with a review of the viewpoints of many well-known rosarians about this status, he in effect pleads, "Can't we all see their beauty, rather than their problems?" He then goes on to discuss the outstanding rose gardens throughout the world including those of France, Belgium, Germany, and others to tell his story of designing with roses. He has used glorious pictures taken to emphasize the beauty to be achieved by using roses to decorate structures, vertically as well as horizontally, describing methods to encourage roses to adapt to the needs of their locale. He gives much credit to the gardens of Monet, Bagatelle, and other French gardens that incorporate various types of roses to complement other plantings. And he indicates a growing concern that much of the tendency for rose growers to concentrate on one perfect bloom on a sturdy stem with little regard for its place in the garden has taken place as a result of rose shows.

His chapter on "Pick of the Bunch" is extensive and inclusive of varieties throughout the world based on their use in wild gardens, mixed borders, to punctuate structures, etc. This includes an international listing of varieties available today. He spares no punches in chastising the rose world for creating the lack of understanding and division we have in promoting the BEAUTY of the rose.

The next meeting of the International World Federation of Rose Societies will meet in Houston, TX in April 2000. Let us hope this will be a basis for a United Front.

Reviewed by Marianne D. Truby

TREASURED PERENNIALS
Graham Stuart Thomas
Portland, Timber Press, 1999, 180 pages, 7½″ x 10″, 182 color illustrations, hardcover, $39.95

More than a household name, Graham Stuart Thomas is not only a man of many talents, but an emissary from a learned and gentle civilization that seems to have nearly vanished, or at least gone into an extended hibernation. All this is quietly apparent in this, the most recent in a long list of titles, which could be considered the "complete GST," as it includes his accomplishments in horticulture, music, and art.

A rambling discussion of plants begins with his fascination with stones as a child in Cambridge, England, which led him to plant his own rock garden to incorporate the favorites in his collection. From there it was a natural path to the University Botanic Garden where he learned to garden, and to botany lectures at the Cambridge Public Library. At the same time, he was an avid admirer of the poet A.E. Houseman and short verses of his poetry begin each chapter. He has also set three Houseman poems to music, and they appear in handwritten manuscript form at the end of the book. As a further accompaniment to his horticultural musings, the cover and frontispiece are decorated with representations of his art work.

Plants are approached from a classical historic standpoint. Thomas begins with ferns, the oldest of plants, and proceeds in subsequent chapters to dicots, grasses, monocots and orchids.

Each topic includes a general definition of characteristics, a survey of earlier varieties and description of more recent cultivars. He intentionally focuses on species that may have fallen from favor, much to his regret, and seeks to reinstate them to popular use.

His discourse is rich with anecdotes and opinions; he even ventures into the pitfalls of plant name changes and reclassification. Although many species may be unfamiliar to California gardeners, Thomas' wisdom and dry wit make this a book to read and enjoy while savoring the presence of such a rare being in our midst.

Reviewed by Marge Howard-Jones

LILIES: A Guide for Growers and Collectors
Edward Austin McRae
Portland, Timber Press, 1998, 392 pages, 109 color photos, 29 line drawings, 6¼" x 9¼", hardcover, $34.95

Here is a serious book for those of us who want to know everything about lilies. Easy to read, packed with knowledge that takes you from a beginning to more advanced plant information, such as exhibiting, hybridizing, and growing lilies for the commercial trade.

The book is divided into three sections. The first includes generally known facts from names of plant parts to explicit instructions on propagation, cultivation, and handling diseases and pests.

The second section covers lily species and the eight hybrid classifications with one chapter on three of the main hybrid lilies: Asiatic, Oriental, and Trumpet. The last chapter in this section is about polyploid lilies. This section is filled with detailed history and amusing anecdotes about each category of lily.

The last section is on more advanced themes, but always written in a style that even beginners can easily assimilate. One chapter called "Personalities of the Lily World" has biographies of twenty-nine people whose work made the lilies what they are today.

The book ends with a Glossary, Bibliography and Index of Plant Names for reference. This book is essential for the serious lily aficionado.

Reviewed by Marion Beecroft

LIVING SEASONALLY: The Kitchen Garden and the Table at North Hill
Joe Eck and Wayne Winterrowd
New York, Henry Holt and Company, Inc., 1999, 200 pages, 7¾" x 10½", 76 color photos, hardcover, $40

Here are two fellows in the wilds of Vermont who are so high on the joys of the four seasons that you, too, may find yourself wistfully dreaming of putting your garden to sleep under a blanket of compost in November and joyfully turning it over again in March. But even if you can easily resist the idea of raising vegetables in the northeast corner of the country, you may still glean the romance of it all through the authors' enthusiastic prose.

Color photos throughout the book add substance and visual beauty to the many rather dense pages filled with double columns of text. However, the descriptions, histories, and anecdotes about a wide variety of vegetables are veritable feasts in themselves. The book is well written and full of the satisfaction and even excitement of nurturing life in a climate that is not always easy. It is also a kind of double biography. The authors go back to the discovery of their farm and trace several incarnations of their vegetable plots, as they moved them to ever newer and better sites. In their place they now have a lovely perennial garden, a lawn and rockery, and a rhododendron forest.

They also raise cows and all manner of fowl on their farm, recognizing the practical as well as the aesthetic and spiritual value of a totally life-enhancing environment. From a practical standpoint, there are recipes for their many varieties of produce and many details about their growing techniques, some of which do relate to our area.

Reviewed by Marge Howard-Jones

GARDENER'S GUIDE TO GROWING DAYLILIES
Diana Grenfell
GARDENER'S GUIDE TO GROWING DAHLIAS
Gareth Rowlands
Portland, Timber Press, 160 pages, 74 color photos, 5 line drawings, 7" x 9½", hardcover, $29.95

Here are two more additions to the *Gardener's Guide to Growing* series. The guide to daylilies was published in 1998 and the one to dahlias in 1999. One outstanding feature of this series is the photography off the color plates showing flowers either full or a fraction of full size, depending on the size of the flower. Each has a glossary specializing in terms relating particularly to a species. I have found them very helpful.

Diana Grenfell is a recognized authority on daylilies and is a co-founder of the British Hosta and Hemerocallis Society. She has written the first hundred pages including a selection of the best daylilies arranged by flower color. Chapters on breeding daylilies and daylilies in North America, Europe, Australia, and New Zealand are written by other experts.

Scanning early issues of *California Garden* gives proof of the popularity of dahlias in San Diego in the early years of the century. This popularity is discussed in the chapter by Martin Kral on "Dahlias in North America." The dahlia, from Central America, also became very popular in Europe toward the end of the eighteenth century. Ten types of dahlias and twenty-seven species are described in detail for those wanting to expand their interest. A chapter on cultivars would appeal to all growers.

Both guides include information on where to see and where to buy either daylilies or dahlias. The guide for dahlias also includes an appendix on Selected American Varieties with the ADS classification codes and classification chart and a selection based on The Fabulous Fifty (varieties receiving at least fifty awards, mainly from shows).

Reviewed by R. Cox

Decorate Your Garden by Mary Keen is now available in softcover for $24.95 from Trafalgar Square Publishing. This was reviewed in the 1995 Mar-Apr issue.

LONGING FOR LONGWOOD©

BY PAT PAWLOWSKI

BEAUTIFUL GARDENS COME IN many forms. There are wildlife gardens, theme gardens, formal gardens, cottage gardens, edible gardens, and xeriscape gardens, just to name a few.

And then there is . . . Longwood Gardens.

The Gardens are located in Kennett Square, Pennsylvania, not far from Philadelphia. For information about hours and such, call 610-388-1000.

As the dumbstruck visitor from San Diego (and perhaps we can all guess who this might be) gazes about, her eyes behold more green—bedazzling!—than she has seen in a very long time.

(This is not a "cheap shot" at the vegetation here in San Diego. The sunny dry wonderful climate of Southern California just does not lend itself to producing a naturally verdant lush greenscape. Much of the time, the wild-looking, rugged, fiercely beautiful hills of coastal sage scrub near my home are a shade of tan, with dark dull green patches and hints of silver. When I walk through these hills the scent of sage, a hauntingly earthy and sensual aroma, permeates the air. Sunshine makes the rocks glisten. Quail call to one another. I wouldn't want to live anyplace else. It is as if I were always meant to be here in East County, sniffing the sage and watching out for rattlesnakes. During these moments, I don't at all miss the green, green grass of home—which used to be eastern Pennsylvania.

Once in a while, however, it's nice to glance around and see deep rich green wherever you look—almost more green than you can handle; and a wonderful huge old conservatory chock-full of plants from all over the world, stunningly displayed, with a special eye toward providing glorious bursts of color. It's nice to watch as beautiful old fountains produce perfectly orchestrated blooms of water, and to plop yourself down onto one of many benches provided for those with tired anatomies.

And that's Longwood Gardens.

HORTICULTURAL HISTORY

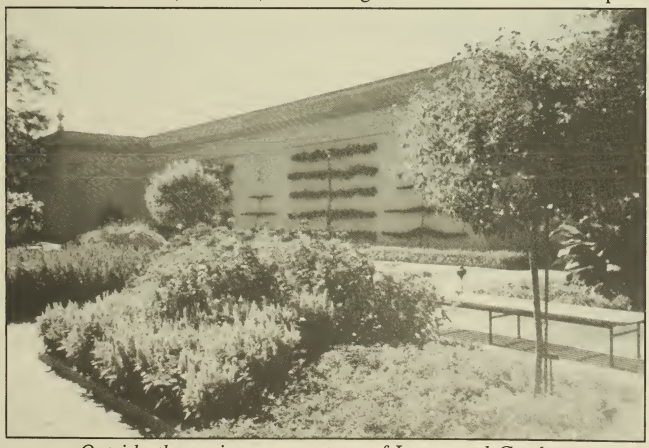
The Heritage of Longwood Gardens, a book I bought in the strategically located Longwood gift shop, discloses that many had a hand in making Longwood bloom. The Lenni Lenape tribe hunted, fished and farmed the land over 400 years ago. In 1700 the Peirce family purchased the property from William Penn and in 1798 Samuel Peirce began planting an arboretum there. However, the primary gardening mover and shaker was Pierre du Pont, who purchased the land in 1906. From 1907 until the 1930s and beyond, du Pont, with the help of hundreds of workers, created most of what is enjoyed today.

And enjoy it you will.

SPECIAL SPOTS

Where to begin?

Perhaps the architecturally elegant, gorgeous old Conservatory would be the place to start. The building itself is a marvel; its Exhibition Hall is huge and delights the eye with its structure, not to mention bougainvillea, tree ferns, and an ivy geranium chandelier. The visitor is led from one astounding sight to another—the Silver Garden, the Tropical Terrace, the Fern Passage, the Orangery. Over 4,500 types of plants are contained in 20 gardens set within nearly four acres of greenhouses.



Outside the main conservatory of Longwood Gardens

Outside the Conservatory, waterlilies, hybrid waterplatters, lotus, papyrus, and other watery wonders fill sculpted pools.

Also included on the extensive grounds, almost as a gift, there are idea gardens to help home horticulturists solve growing problems. Design ideas

flower among the petunias. Rural mailboxes dotted among the plants contain free tip sheets.

Hungry naturalists take note: If you want butter and butterflies too, be sure to take your cafeteria-purchased food outside and sit at a patio table located near a vibrant purple hedge of verbena. While our party tended to our lunches, the hedge was visited by several swallowtails and one painted lady, come to sip nectar as we sipped soda, tea and/or water.

One of the beautiful terraces scattered throughout the gardens.

Speaking of water—fed and satisfied, our group wandered onto a huge terrace to watch an impressive fountain display in the Main Fountain Garden, an enormous area of awe-inspiring architecture, statuary, plants, and dozens of jets of water, rising as high as 130 feet. Since the water show only wet our whistles for more, we strolled to the Italian Water Garden, along blooming tree-lined paths. There were so many blooming paths!

They were all, in their way, special.

My special places may not be your special places. It's best to check Longwood out for yourself. Remember that during the winter months the green of Longwood might only be found inside the conservatories; after all, it DOES snow back east. The winter holiday displays, of course, are beautiful; but if you have a choice of when you can visit, pick spring, summer or early fall. The dose of green you will get will be enough to last you through at least ten dry San Diego summers.

Text copyright by Pat Pawlowski, who is a writer/lecturer and the wildlife garden designer for Animated Gardens. Photographs by Sarah Pardys.

(Providing Habitat for California Quail, continued from page 167)

clover (*Trifolium* sp.), bur clover (*Medicago* sp.), and fiddlenecks (*Amsinckia* sp.). You may have noticed a number of "weeds" in that list. It's true, quail have adapted to our new cosmopolitan plant "communities." These annuals germinate quickly at the onset of the rainy season providing quick nutritious leaf browse and then produce great quantities of seed by mid-summer that will be sustenance for the quail until the rains return.

Any native wildflower seed mix that works well for you will fill the same role, as long as you protect the seed from being gobbled up before it gets to germinate and then allow the plants to go to seed in summer time. Though California quail seem to prefer the foliage and seeds of annual members of the pea family (Leguminosae), they are content to forage on acorns and the seeds and fruits of many of our native shrubs. In fact, you can plant many different shrubs that will provide good cover or shelter, a reliable food source, and an attractive landscape for you.

If you have an oak tree in or at the edge of your yard, you are already ahead in the game, as these provide both nighttime roosts and autumn food. Complement the oak with species or cultivars of *Ceanothus* and *Arctostaphylos* (manzanitas), a lemonade berry or sugar bush (Rhus sp.), a coastal quail bush of course (*Atriplex lentiformis*), a few of our local salvias such as white sage and Cleveland sage out on the sunnier edge. Then you will have a backbone border for your wildflowers that will provide sturdy structure to hide under, beauty to enjoy year-round, and great quantities of seed to supplement the diet of your intended guests. Now is the time to plant your quail habitat. Good luck and happy planting.□

Pat Regan likes to hang out with his children and watch birds. He has a degree in environmental education, is a Master Gardener, and is the naturalist at Green Oak Ranch.

right, *Ceanothus* 'RayHartman', a virtual tree to 20′, which can provide nighttime roosting places.

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Senior Center

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Nov & Dec ONLY, 3rd Wed
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4th Sun - 1:00 pm, Ecke Building
Quail Gardens

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Jan/Feb - 4th Mon

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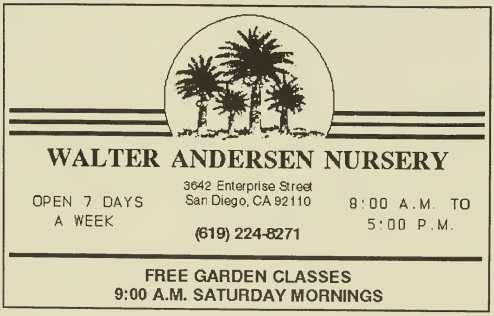

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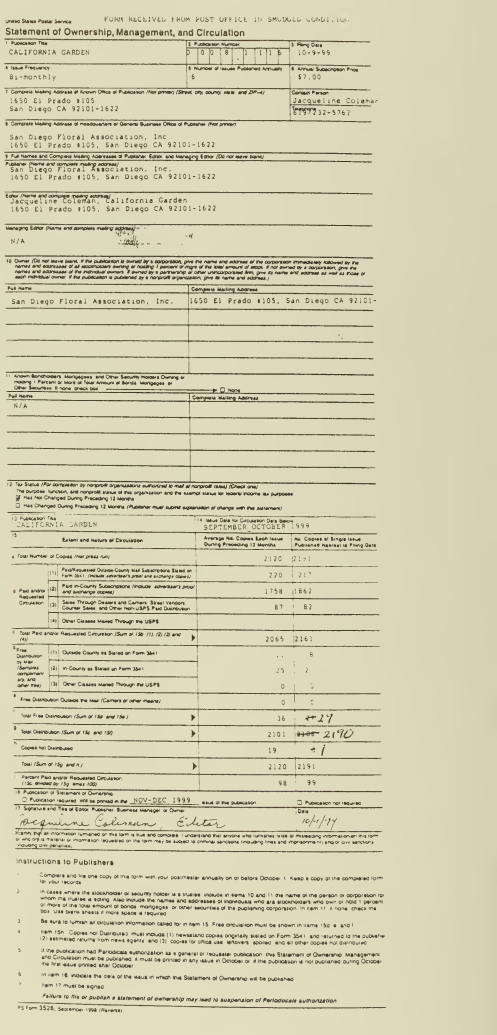

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